

Making Art out of Junk:

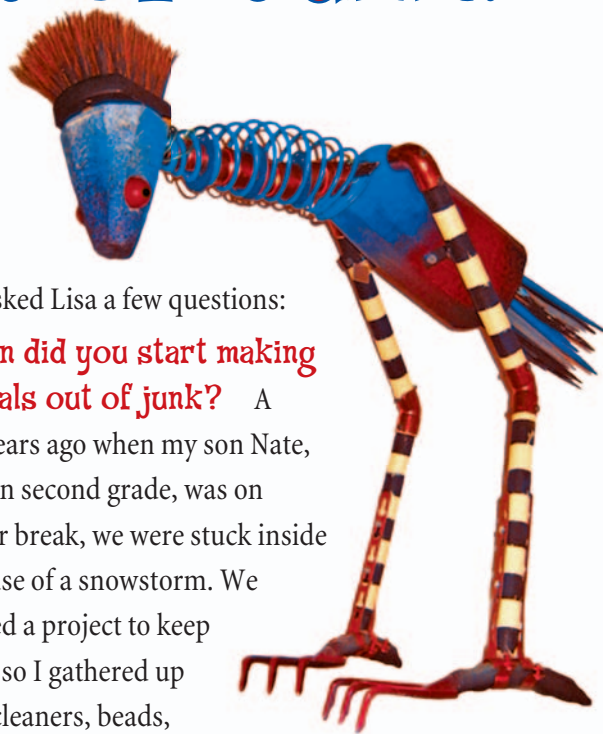
Meet the Artist!

Lisa Fowler is an artist who makes playful art. As a child, Lisa loved animals. She had many pets, including hamsters, cats, fish, and even a horse! Even though she lived in a small house with big family, she still found room for more pets. She often brought home lizards, snakes, and other creatures. Lisa also liked to draw and paint. She especially liked drawing and painting her many pets.

In college, Lisa studied science and art. She began her career as an artist at the zoo. Her bird paintings are used on signs to help visitors at the zoo in Boston! Today, Lisa makes art using her knowledge of science and her creative imagination. She builds animals out of metal, wood, paint, fabric, and junk. The pieces of junk are everyday things that Lisa finds around her house, in her garage, or at the town garbage dump. She uses these pieces to make the special parts of her animals—a feather duster can be an ostrich's tail, or garden rakes can be a bird's feet. Each of her animals is unique—each is different and special in its own way. Lisa thinks of these animals as friendly pets, like the animals she brought home when she was a little girl.



Lisa Fowler with one of her creatures, Dusty.



We asked Lisa a few questions:

When did you start making animals out of junk?

A few years ago when my son Nate, then in second grade, was on winter break, we were stuck inside because of a snowstorm. We needed a project to keep busy, so I gathered up pipe cleaners, beads, and feathers. For two weeks, we created animals. After the storm was over, Nate went back to school, and I kept making animals.

Where do you get your ideas for your animals?

My ideas for my animals usually start with the wacky pieces of junk that I find. I'll think of all of the neat parts that I have—like jump rope handles, lightbulbs, and scrub brushes. Then I try to think of what animal can grow from it. On long car rides, I put the pieces together in my mind, and then I go home and try to build the picture in my head. It never works out how I think it will, so I have to be flexible. I often have to take it apart and try it again.

What would you tell a kid who wants to be an artist?

Always carry a sketch pad with you. Remember to look carefully, and you will always find something new and different, even if you have drawn something a hundred times before.

What is your favorite part of being an artist?

It is always a challenge to look at things differently than I ever have before. And I am thrilled to make my animals. I feel like I am making friendly little pets to fill my house!